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By **BOB TEMMEY**

The FBI "never once" told its agents to investigate a possible conspiracy in the assassinations of John and Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, charges ex-agent Arthur Murtagh.

In fact, leads that could have uncovered a conspiracy "were disregarded," he said.

"Had the FBI conducted a more thorough probe, I'm convinced links would have been established in all three murders.

"And I am also convinced those links would connect to one or more right-wing subversive groups in the United States, and reveal that they masterminded the three deaths to slow down the move toward liberalism in the nation.

"But never once were we told to investigate conspiracy," said Murtagh, who was an agent during all three assassinations.

"We conducted a straight criminal investigation. We never even looked for conspiracy.

"We were cautioned over and over again only to find the murderers, and once we found them, that was to be the end of it," Murtagh continued.

"If we had investigated the three assassinations the same way we in-

Former Agent Charges . . .

FBI Deliberately Ignored Conspiracy Theory in Murders of JFK, RFK and Martin Luther King

vestigated the Communist Party or the Black Panthers — if we had developed informants in some of the right-wing organizations — I'm sure we'd have come up with something that would have shocked the American people."

Murtagh complained that the Federal Bureau of Investigation has never investigated right-wing extremist groups with anywhere near the intensive effort the bureau expended in spying on left-wing and black activist organizations.

He pointed out that from 1966 to 1971, when he retired from the FBI's Atlanta branch office, he was under orders to recruit spies to infiltrate black groups.

"I had 15 paid informants working for me when I left," said the 21-year FBI veteran.

Murtagh said that he retired early as a top-graded agent "because I saw no reforms coming."

Murtagh, 54, who is now a lawyer in

Constable, N.Y., believes the late J. Edgar Hoover deliberately avoided an investigation of the far right in connection with the assassinations.

"I'm convinced he thought — or even knew — that it would lead in a direction that would be embarrassing to his right-wing friends and supporters," he said.

"It seems awfully strange to me that King and the two Kennedys, all liberals, were murdered in such a



EX-FBI AGENT
Arthur Murtagh
"We never looked for conspiracy."

relatively short space of time," he continued, adding that their assassinations effectively eliminated strong leadership in the civil rights and liberal movements in the nation."

Summing up his feelings about the FBI, Murtagh admitted: "I was ashamed to be a part of it. It was a disgusting, degrading experience."

He recalled an incident that happened to him the day King was assassinated. "One agent stopped me in the hallway at the Atlanta bureau and announced: 'They just got Zorro! They shot him in Memphis!'"

"Zorro was the FBI code name for King. The agent was jubilant, really excited and happy. That's the kind of mentality we had in the FBI."